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### **PF responds to Internet incident; Mother takes action after 12-year-old daughter elicits contact from adult males**

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POST FALLS -- Dona Jones wasn't sure what was happening with her 12-year-old daughter and a friend.

When the girls weren't in front of the Post Falls Library at the agreed-upon time, Jones went inside to peek behind them while they were on the Internet.

They were downloading pictures of themselves from their cell phones and uploading them to a site called Myspace.com, billed as "a place for friends" to stay in touch.

"Kids are very naive," Jones said Wednesday. "They thought only other people their age would be contacting them and that they would just be pen pals."

But the girls' pictures captured the attention of others.

"Even though my daughter is 12, she doesn't look like she's 12," Jones said.

Soon after the posting, Jones said her daughter was getting calls from males in places such as Spokane and Seattle.

When Jones learned that her daughter planned to meet someone at a mall, Jones decided to show up by herself. Waiting were two males in their 20s.

"It only takes one time and your kids could be gone," Jones said. "It really freaked me out."

The scary experience caused Jones to take personal action. She blocked her daughter's long distance, photo and text messaging capabilities on the phone.

Jones didn't stop there. Not when it's a growing community-wide problem.

"All of my daughter's friends are doing this," she said.

Jones pleaded her case to the police, school district and library, and all responded.

The three agencies and Jones are planning a free awareness session on Internet contact dangers April 18 at 7 p.m. at the library. It is open to parents and students.

"We're trying to present a united front to deal with this," said Joe Reiss, library director.

Schools and libraries do what they can to block certain sites and chat rooms and install filtering programs. They also require parents to sign contracts on their kids' Internet usage that warn about possible dangers.

But with ever-changing technology and new sites constantly cropping up, no system is fool-proof.

"It's like playing Twister in 3-D," Reiss said. "You patch one hole and another comes up."

Police Lt. Greg McLean said Internet contacts involving minors is rising.

In one recent case, an 18-year-old came from Texas to have sex with a local teen girl.

"They're able to get information off of the postings to locate a person's phone number, address and schools," McLean said.

In another case, police found that a local girl who claimed to be 18 but wasn't had posted information on a body-ranking site. The girls' parents were notified.

"We think that parents need to be educated about the risks of children putting themselves on the Internet like that," McLean said.

Jon Wilkerson, Post Falls' school technical coordinator, said he believes such improper Internet usage in schools dropped since he installed a hardware filtering system last year. Violations result in suspensions of varying degrees, he said.

Becky Ford, assistant school superintendent, said the district has strict policies and programs in place, but wants to communicate to students the dangers of Internet contacts.

Jones believes the session will have widespread interest and is greatly needed.

"I'm sure I'm not the only computer-inept parent," she said. "There's a lot of stuff out there -- it will blow your mind. Computers are a great educational tool, but they can also bring on a lot of trouble."